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SC SLAMS MANEKA GANDHI'S CRITIQUE OF STRAY DOGS ORDER

The Supreme Court on Tuesday lambasted former Union minister Maneka Gandhi for calling the order on stray dogs 'impractical'

NOT INITIATING CONTEMPT PROCEEDINGS: SC

A bench of justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and N V Anjaria said Maneka made "all kinds of comments" without thinking, but added it is not initiating contempt proceedings because of the court's magnanimity. Senior advocate Raju Ramachandran, for Menaka, said his client's words are not contempt as politicians do make statements

SC FLAGS DISREGARD OF ITS NORMS ON STRAYS

- The Supreme Court was hearing several petitions seeking modification of its Nov 7, 2025 order directing the authorities to remove stray animals from the institutional areas and roads
- The bench also flagged concerns over the non-implementation of norms on stray animals for the last five years

JAN 28

IS WHEN THE SUPREME COURT WILL HEAR THE MATTER NEXT

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

DGP Rao suspended over alleged obscene video

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

FOR the first time in the history of Karnataka, a Director General of Police (DGP) rank officer has been suspended. Hours after an alleged intimate video involving **K Ramachandra Rao** surfaced online on Monday, the state government placed him under suspension.

Rao, a 1993-batch IPS officer, was heading the Directorate of Civil Rights Enforcement (DCRE). The undated 47-second compilation, consisting of three separate video clips, and two audio recordings, surfaced on Monday afternoon. In the video, the DGP is allegedly seen in a compromising position inside his office during working hours. While speaking to reporters at the residence of Home Minister G Parameshwara on Monday, Rao claimed the video was "fabricated" and demanded a thorough investigation.

As per the government order issued late Monday night, the officer acted in an obscene manner, which is unbecoming of a government servant and caused embarrassment to the government. It stated that it was convinced that Rao's conduct amounted to a violation of Rule 2 of the All-India Services (Conduct) Rules. The order stated that Rao shall not leave headquarters under any circumstances without prior written permission from the government.

In 2025, Rao was sent on compulsory leave after his stepdaughter, Ranya Rao, was arrested in a gold smuggling case. A probe was initiated to determine whether Rao had aided his stepdaughter in the smuggling. He was given a clean chit and was posted as DGP, DCRE.

PARTY REIN IN NABIN HANDS

I can say Nitin Nabin ji is a millennial. He belongs to a generation that has witnessed a great deal of change... When it comes to party matters, Mananiya Nitin Nabin ji... I am a worker, and you are my boss
Narendra Modi, PM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the newly elected BJP president Nitin Nabin at the party's headquarters in New Delhi on Tuesday. A five-time MLA from Bihar, Nabin, 45, was declared elected unopposed, becoming the youngest ever in BJP to occupy the top post. "BJP is the only party where it is not necessary to belong to any particular family to hold major positions," Nabin said. Soon after taking over charge from J P Nadda, he sought to set the tone for the upcoming state polls targeting opposition parties on a range of issues including the "changing demographics" | SAYANTAN GHOSH | P11

Markets in red over Greenland

Terrible Tuesday: Sensex dives to lowest in 3 months, wipes off ₹10L cr of investor wealth

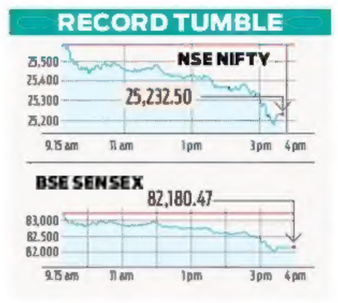
ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

THE fortune of Indian equity market, it appears, is firmly tied to the vagaries of US president Donald Trump. He seems to be the biggest 'cue' the domestic equity market is paying heed to as ₹10 lakh crore worth of investors' wealth was wiped out on Tuesday amid US' deepening standoff with Europe over Greenland.

The stock market fell sharply on Tuesday, with benchmark NSE Nifty nosediving to its lowest level in three months and experiencing its biggest single-day fall since April 2025. The NSE Nifty settled 353 points or 1.38% lower at 25,232.50 while the BSE Sensex tumbled 1,066 points or 1.28% to close at 82,180. The sell-off was such that 48 stocks in the Nifty50 pack ended in the red and the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms came down to ₹455.76 lakh crore from ₹465.19 lakh crore.

Investor sentiment across the globe has taken a hit over concerns related to US President Donald Trump proposing tariffs on countries opposing his bid to control Greenland and a subsequent pushback from Europe. This has revived fears of renewed global trade disruptions, prompting investors to exit equities.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments said domestic markets remained cautious ahead of the US Supreme Court's ruling on Trump-era tariffs, with renewed uncertainty over US trade policy prolonging the recent consolidation. He added that continued FII outflows, rising US and Japanese bond yields, and a weakening rupee weighed on investor confidence.



In the near term, market sentiment will hinge on the earnings season, while geopolitical developments and global trade conditions remain important influences, he said.

The rupee ended at 90.98 per dollar, slightly weaker than Monday's close of 90.91. In the broader market, the Nifty Midcap 100 and Nifty Smallcap 100 underperformed the frontline indices, falling by up to 3 per cent each.

FIIs sold equities worth ₹2,192 crore on Tuesday, marking the 11th consecutive session of net outflows this month. In the Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index settled lower. Markets in Europe were trading over 1 per cent lower. P15

TALE OF TWO GOVERNORS

Governor R N Ravi walks out of Tamil Nadu Assembly on Tuesday without delivering customary address | EXPRESS

Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan receives Governor Rajendra Arlekar ahead of the assembly session | VINCENT PULICKAL

Ravi refuses to deliver customary speech in House

T MURUGANANDHAM @ Chennai

FOR the third consecutive year, Governor RN Ravi's annual customary inaugural address to the Assembly became a flashpoint, with the governor once again refusing to read the speech prepared by the state. He left the House abruptly, declining to deliver the speech, alleging insult to national anthem and unsubstantiated claims in the state-prepared text.

Minutes after the walkout, the governor's office released a statement listing out 13 reasons as to why he had declined to read out the prepared speech. The statement from the Lok Bhavan, among other things, alleged that the governor's microphone was switched off repeatedly and the national anthem was insulted by not being rendered at the beginning of the session (*Thamizh Thaai Vaazhthu* was rendered first as conventionally done in the TN Assembly). The other 11 reasons dealt with various alleged issues of concern in the state.

The governor's office alleged that the prepared speech was marked by unsubstantiated claims, particularly on investment inflows, with many MoUs remaining unrealised, declining FDI rankings, severe stress on MSMEs, and growing discontent among lower-level employees over their unaddressed demands. "It ignored social concerns like rising crimes against women, rising Pocso cases, rampant drug abuse among youth leading to thousands of suicides, escalating atrocities against Dalits, and TN's alarming suicide rate," the Lok Bhavan's statement said. P7

Arlekar altered policy address, alleges Pinarayi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ T'Puram

DRAMATIC scenes unfolded in the Kerala Assembly on Tuesday as Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan sought to correct Governor Rajendra Arlekar's policy address after the latter had finished his speech and left the House. While Vijayan flagged "omissions" and "alterations" to the text approved by the Cabinet, sources close to the governor said Arlekar had read out an amended version of the address to which the government had earlier agreed but backtracked later.

Immediately after seeing off the governor from the House following his two-hour policy address, the CM drew attention to the "mismatch" between the Cabinet-approved text and what was actually delivered. He urged the Speaker to rule that the policy address approved by the Cabinet would prevail.

Vijayan was provoked by the governor's omission of a passage critical of the Centre: "Kerala continues to face severe fiscal stress arising from a series of adverse Union government actions that undermine the constitutional principles of fiscal federalism."

Another omission was about the ongoing tussle between the governor and the state government over delays in granting assent to bills passed by the Assembly.

Lok Bhavan sources said the governor skipped some "factually incorrect" portions.

Speaker A N Shamseer later ruled that only the speech ratified by the Cabinet would be recognised as the official version.

Panchayat staff will train GBA poll officers on ballot paper

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

AS Bengaluru will go to the polls with ballot papers, tahsildars and panchayat members will now be roped in to train staffers at the Greater Bengaluru Authority. Since these staffers have continued to use ballot papers for panchayat elections, they know how to handle ballot papers, and the State Election Commission is roping them in to train staffers, who will be overseeing the election process in Bengaluru, said State Election Commissioner GS Sangreshi.

"Bengalurueans last voted using ballot papers in 2001. It has been 20-25 years. Ballot papers are not banned or prohibited by courts or the Election Commission. They can still be used. Some training will be needed now for this system. But it will be done, just like the routine exercise for all elections. This time, however, a little more attention will be given," he elaborated.

The Greater Bengaluru Authority Election Governance Rules and Act mentions the use of ballot papers or EVMs for elections.

"Weighing all aspects and maintaining a balance, it was decided to use ballot papers. Many people who will vote now and those of this generation have not seen ballot papers and this form of voting," he said.

Election officials at the Greater Bengaluru Authority said the staff will need complete training on using ballot papers. CONTINUED ON: P2

India's Bangladesh mission now a non-family posting

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

INDIA has designated its diplomatic mission in Bangladesh as a non-family posting for the time being, citing security concerns. As a precautionary measure, dependents of the Indian Mission and Post officials have been advised to return to India, while all diplomatic missions and posts in Bangladesh remain open and fully operational, sources said.

The decision reflects New Delhi's assessment of the prevailing security environment following months of political instability and rising tensions over the treatment of minority communities. Sources described the move as precautionary, taken in view of evolving ground conditions.

Bangladesh is preparing to hold its first national election since the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government was ousted in a violent, student-led protest in August 2024. Election campaigning is scheduled to begin on January 22, with authorities promising strict security arrangements. However, the period leading up to the polls has been marked by sporadic violence, contributing to concerns among foreign governments and diplomatic missions. The safety of minority communities has emerged as a key issue in India's recent engagement with Dhaka.

India's decision to shift its mission to a non-family posting signals that it views the current situation as sufficient enough to warrant added caution.

Such measures are usually adopted when host countries face prolonged political uncertainty or elevated security risks, even as routine diplomatic engagement continues.

Bilateral strain visible in sporting domain

Strains have also surfaced in the sporting domain. Bangladesh's Sports Adviser Asif Nazrul said the national cricket team will not travel to India to participate in the T20 World Cup. His statement followed reports that ICC asked Dhaka to confirm participation by January 21

EXPRESS READ

Khandre elected Mahasabha prez

Bengaluru: Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre has been unanimously elected national president of the All-India Veerashaiva-Lingayat Mahasabha, taking over the reins following the passing of senior Congress MLA Shamanur Shivashankarappa (94) | P4

Email fraud: Police recover Rs 2.16cr

Bengaluru: The Cyber Crime Police recovered Rs 2.16 crore within the 'golden hour' in an email spoofing case. Police said cyber criminals from Nigeria impersonated the official email ID of Keshava Group Pharmaceuticals to commit the fraud | P5

Ethnic violence in Assam after 2 die

Guwahati: Protesters clashed with the police and carried out arson attacks on Tuesday as Assam's Kokrajhar remained on the edge after an Adivasi (Tea Tribe) mob attacked Bodo youth, killing one of them on the spot | P12

Heritage boom: Lakkundi land prices see record highs

RAGHOTTAM KOPPAR
@ Lakkundi (Gadag)

ONCE a quiet heritage village, Lakkundi is now witnessing a land rush few could have imagined. Barely two years ago, in 2023, agricultural land near Lakkundi and along the national highway was priced at around Rs 50 lakh per acre. Within two years, the prices have nearly doubled, touching an all-time high for the region.

Real estate agents and experts attribute the sharp rise to the village's growing heritage value and improved connectivity through the national highway. The Tourism Department's decision to launch a major excavation series in and around Lakkundi has significantly altered the village's prospects.

An artifact excavated in Lakkundi recently

Villagers hope that the excavation will unearth historical artefacts and treasures, paving the way for better rehabilitation and housing. Some residents with large ancestral houses expect the government to provide alternative homes proportionate to their existing site areas. A septuagenarian resident said his family owns a two-storey ancestral house and hopes the government will provide a 'good house' in return, as they are leaving behind homes built by their forefathers.

Several villagers present at the excavation sites said they should not be given houses under schemes like Awas Yojana, but proper replacement homes, considering the heritage value of their existing properties.

But, farmers expressed concern that agricultural land may be converted into residential sites, fuelling speculative price spikes. With the national highway offering seamless connectivity and growing talk of a 'New Lakkundi' heritage zone, investor interest has risen sharply.

Coinciding with this, reports of gold found in one of the residential areas here have once again brought the village into public discussion. P7